

CLAIMS

1. A method for monitoring the use of different multicast services, which are provided by at least one content server (102) as one multicast group for each service in a multicast capable access network (106) to which users (103) of the multicast services are connected through network devices (104), the network devices (104) comprising several ports and all the users (103) being connected to different ports, characterised by the steps of:
 - providing in the network (106) a monitoring device (101) connected to said network devices (104);
 - retrieving periodically in the monitoring device (101) from the network devices (104), information about which multicast groups being forwarded through which ports in the network devices (104);
 - storing said information in the monitoring device (101); and
 - evaluating the information to achieve a measure of the use of the different multicast services.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the access network is an Ethernet access network (106).
3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, characterised by using different paths in the network for the retrieving of information from the network devices (104) than the multicast services use.
4. A computer program product directly loadable into the internal memory of a processing means within a monitoring device, comprising the software code means for performing the retrieving and storing steps and possibly the evaluating step according to claim 1.

5. A computer program product stored on a computer usable medium, comprising readable program for causing a processing means in a monitoring device, to control an execution of the retrieving and storing steps and possibly the evaluating step according to claim 1.

6. A monitoring device connected to a multicast capable access network (106) for monitoring the use of different multicast services, which are provided by at least one content server (102) as one multicast group for each service in the access network (106) to which users (103) of the multicast services are connected through network devices (104), the network devices (104) comprising several ports and all the users (103) being connected to different ports, **characterised in that it comprises:**

- retrieving means (301) adapted to periodically retrieve from the network devices (104) information about which multicast groups being forwarded through which ports in the network devices (104); and
- storing means (305) connected to the retrieving means (301) and adapted to store the information.

7. A monitoring device according to claim 6, **characterised in that it further comprises an evaluating means (307) connected to said storing means (305) adapted to evaluate said information to achieve a measure of the use of the different multicast services.**

8. A monitoring device according to claim 6 or 7, **characterised in that it comprises a timer (303) connected to the retrieving means (301) adapted to periodically tell the retrieving means (301) that it is time to retrieve the information from the network devices (104).**

9. A monitoring device according to any one of the claims 6-8, **characterised in that it is adapted to be connected to an Ethernet access network (106).**